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Agency Policy on Length of Overseas Service

Apart from the necessary legal, budgetary, and cover restrictions ~~that pertain to~~ ^{on} the minimum length of overseas service, there has never been any attempt to formalize an ~~agency-wide~~ ^{OR organizationwide} policy ~~with~~ ^{ing} regard to the length of time that a person should ~~properly~~ serve overseas in one location. ~~Absence~~ ^{Lack} of policy in this regard is thoroughly understandable in the light of ~~the Agency's~~ ^{our} need for ~~operational~~ flexibility and the unique and different approach of each Career Service in solving the problem of development and training of its personnel. The ~~operational~~ ^{operational} ~~land~~ ^{land} ~~services~~ necessarily place far greater emphasis on area specialization than do certain of the support services. While these differences will continue to influence ~~Agency~~ ^{organization} practices to some extent, there is now a trend in the direction of greater uniformity.

Two changes have taken place recently which are pertinent. First, many senior technicians and administrative personnel have completed assignments overseas, thus making it less urgent that rotation of such personnel be continued at a rapid pace. The two-year limitation ~~on~~ length of service overseas for personnel in these categories so that ~~others~~ ^{many} could gain the benefit of overseas experience is no longer necessary. Second, it has been increasingly recognized that the value of support personnel to station management increases steadily during the first several years of assignment. With time they gain increased knowledge of the language used in the area, stronger support liaison

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connections, and a broader understanding of the internal complexities of our overseas stations.

164 Given the minimum length of tour as a point of departure, it will now be policy that personnel assigned overseas may be continued in an assignment for three years or may be given two or more two-year assignments in the same area if:

- (1) no immediate and higher priority assignment exists at Headquarters or elsewhere,
- (2) the individual's personal circumstances do not dictate a change,
- (3) the post is not a hardship post, and
- (4) the Chief of Station or the appropriate responsible officer in the field desires such extension.

141 Each career service will be responsible for weighing these factors and for making its decision concerning the length of an individual's overseas service. This will normally be done during the individual's second year overseas.

547 There will be an outside limit to the number of years a man may serve in any one area: five years for support personnel and seven years for operations personnel. There will be exceptions.

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